

IN THE CLAIMS

1-12. (canceled)

13. (currently amended) An intervertebral spacer device comprising:

a first plate having an inner surface and an exterior surface;

a second plate having an inner surface and an exterior surface;

wherein ~~an said inner surface of one of said plates~~ first plate comprises a ball-shaped structure extending therefrom and ~~an said inner surface of the other one of said plates~~ second plate has a spring affixed thereto, said spring having a curvate volume for receiving and holding therein said ball-shaped structure, said spring having a top side with a curved convex surface that extends from the curvate volume and confronts ~~the one of said plates~~ said inner surface of said first plate and an underside with a curved concave surface that extends from the curvate volume and is spaced from and confronts ~~the other one of said plates~~ said inner surface of said second plate.

14. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 13, further comprising a mesh secured over one of said exterior surfaces, wherein said mesh is deflectable relative to the one of said exterior surfaces, and wherein the one of said exterior surfaces includes a substantially flat region and said mesh overlies and is spaced from said substantially flat region.

15. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 14, wherein said mesh overlying said substantially flat region has a convex shape when in an undeflected state.

16. (currently amended) An intervertebral spacer device comprising:

a first plate having an exterior surface; and
a second plate having an exterior surface;
a joint that couples said first and second plates together,
said joint including a ball attached with ~~one of said plates~~
said first plate and a socket affixed with ~~the other one of said~~
~~plates~~ said second plate for receiving and holding therein said
ball, wherein said joint permits said first and second plates to
move relative to one another, and wherein said socket has a top
side with a curved convex surface that confronts ~~the one of said~~
~~plates~~ said first plate and an underside with a curved concave
surface that is spaced from and confronts ~~the other one of said~~
~~plates~~ said second plate.

17. (canceled)

18. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim
13, wherein said spring comprises a force restoring element
disposed between said plates for counteracting load applied to
at least one of said plates.

19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim
13, wherein said ball-shaped structure is inwardly deflectable
for being inserted into said curvate volume.

21. (currently amended) An intervertebral spacer device
comprising:

first and second plates having exterior surfaces, said
first and second plates being movable relative to one another;

wherein an inner surface of ~~one of said plates~~ said first
plate has a ball-shaped structure extending therefrom and an
inner surface of ~~the other one of said plates~~ said second plate

has a spring affixed thereto, said spring having an opening for receiving and holding therein said ball-shaped structure, wherein said spring has a top side with a curved convex surface surrounding the opening and confronting ~~the one of said plates~~ said inner surface of said first plate and an underside with a curved concave surface surrounding the opening and spaced from and confronting ~~the other one of said plates~~ said inner surface of said second plates.

22. (canceled)

23. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein the opening of said spring comprises a curvate volume for receiving and holding therein said ball-shaped structure.

24. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 21, further comprising a deflectable porous surface secured over one of said exterior surfaces, said porous surface being movable between an undeflected state and a deflected state, wherein said deflectable porous surface has a curved surface when in the undeflected state.

25. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein said deflectable porous surface comprises a wire mesh.

26. (previously presented) The device as claimed in claim 25, wherein said wire mesh has a perimeter that is anchored to the exterior surface of the one of said plates and a center that is movable relative to the exterior surface of the one of said plates.

27. (new) The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein said spring is secured to said second plate.

28. (new) The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein said spring has at least one hole extending therethrough and said device further comprises a fastener extending through the at least one hole for securing said spring to said second plate.

29. (new) The device as claimed in claim 13, wherein said spring has holes at opposite ends thereof and said device further comprises a fastener extending through each of said holes for securing said spring to said second plate.

30. (new) The device as claimed in claim 16, wherein said socket is secured to said second plate.

31. (new) The device as claimed in claim 16, wherein said socket has at least one hole extending therethrough and said device further comprises a fastener extending through the at least one hole for securing said socket to said second plate.

32. (new) The device as claimed in claim 16, wherein said socket has holes at opposite ends thereof and said device further comprises a fastener extending through each of said holes for securing said socket to said second plate.

33. (new) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein said spring is secured to said second plate.

34. (new) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein said spring has at least one hole extending therethrough and said device further comprises a fastener extending through the at least one hole for securing said spring to said second plate.

35. (new) The device as claimed in claim 21, wherein said spring has holes at opposite ends thereof and said device further comprises a fastener extending through each of said holes for securing said spring to said second plate.